

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

1. - 8. (Canceled)

1                   9.     A method of operating a storage system wherein when a storage system  
2 detects that a remaining amount of its own storage area has become less than a predetermined  
3 value, a remote storage area provided by a remote storage system in communication with said  
4 storage system is made available as said storage area.

1                   10.    A method of operating a storage system according to claim 9,  
2 wherein specifications such as a size and a logic format of said remote storage  
3 area to be utilized are notified from said storage system to said remote storage system, and  
4 wherein said remote storage system provides said remote storage area having said  
5 specifications as the storage area for said storage system.

1                   11.    A method of operating a storage system according to claim 9,  
2 wherein a utilization state of said remote storage area for said storage system is  
3 monitored in said remote storage system, and  
4 wherein whether or not said storage area in said storage system is to be increased  
5 is decided according to said utilization state.

1                   12.    A method of operating a storage system according to claim 9, wherein  
2 data stored and managed in said remote storage area is copied to the storage area of said storage  
3 system when the storage area of said storage system is enlarged.

1                   13.    A storage system used in the method of operating a storage system  
2 according to claim 9, comprising at least one disk unit providing said storage area, and a  
3 communication interface for communicating with said remote storage system.

1                   14.    A storage system used in the method of operating a storage system  
2 according to claim 10, comprising at least one disk unit providing said storage area, and a  
3 communication interface for communicating with said remote storage system.

1                   15.    A storage system used in the method of operating a storage system  
2 according to claim 11, comprising at least one disk unit providing said storage area, and a  
3 communication interface for communicating with said remote storage system.

1                   16.    A storage system used in the method of operating a storage system  
2 according to claim 12, comprising at least one disk unit providing said storage area, and a  
3 communication interface for communicating with said remote storage system.

1                   17.    A remote storage system used in the method of operating a storage system  
2 according to claim 9, comprising at least one disk unit providing said remote storage area, and a  
3 communication interface for communicating with said storage system.

1                   18.    A remote storage system used in the method of operating a storage system  
2 according to claim 10, comprising at least one disk unit providing said remote storage area, and a  
3 communication interface for communicating with said storage system.

1                   19.    A remote storage system used in the method of operating a storage system  
2 according to claim 11, comprising at least one disk unit providing said remote storage area, and a  
3 communication interface for communicating with said storage system.

1                   20.    A remote storage system used in the method of operating a storage system  
2 according to claim 12, comprising at least one disk unit providing said remote storage area, and a  
3 communication interface for communicating with said storage system.

1                   21.    A method of operating a storage system,  
2 wherein when a storage system detects that a remaining amount of its own storage  
3 area that is provided by at least one first disk unit installed in said storage system has become

4 less than a predetermined value, a remote storage area that is provided by at least one second  
5 disk unit installed in a remote storage system in communication with said storage system is made  
6 available as said storage area,

7 wherein said storage system stores a correspondence between:

8 a port ID for specifying each disk unit, and

9 an identifier of said first disk unit or an identifier of said second disk unit,

10 and

11 wherein, when said storage system uses said remote storage area as its  
12 storage area, said storage system stores a correspondence between:

13 said port ID, and

14 an identifier of said second disk unit that provides said remote

15 storage area.

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